

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicants cancel claims 20, 22, 25 and 26, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein, and amend claims 21, 23 and 27. With claims 1, 5, 12, 15 and 19 having been previously canceled, claims 2-4, 6-11, 13, 14, 16-18, 21, 23, 24, 27 and 28 are pending in this application.

In the Office Action of November 19, 2004,¹ claims 2-4, 6-11, 13, 14 and 16-18 were allowed. Claims 20 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0016636 (“*Tari*”); and claims 21, 22 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Tari*. Claims 23, 24, 27 and 28 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but were indicated as being drawn to allowable subject matter. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter and address the rejections and objection below.

Section 102(e) rejection of claims 20 and 25 based on *Tari*

The § 102(e) rejection of claims 20 and 25 as anticipated by *Tari* is rendered moot by the cancellation of those claims.

Section 103(a) rejection of claims 21, 22 and 26 based on *Tari*

The § 103(a) rejection of claims 22 and 26 as unpatentable over *Tari* is rendered moot by the cancellation of those claims. Further, the rejection of claim 21 should be withdrawn at least because that claim, as currently amended, depends upon claim 23, which, as the Examiner affirmed, is allowable over the applied art (Office Action “OA” at 3). Applicants thus request withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection of claim 21 and the timely allowance of that claim.

¹ The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

Objection to claims 23, 24, 27 and 28

The Examiner objected to claims 23, 24, 27 and 28 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, indicating, however, that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form with the base and intervening claim limitations (OA at 3). Claims 23 and 27 are rewritten in independent form including the respective base and intervening claim limitations. Because claims 23 and 27 are now in the form the Examiner indicated would be allowable, Applicants request withdrawal of the objection and the timely allowance of these claims. Applicants also request the timely allowance of claims 24 and 28, as these claims depend upon claims 23 and 27, respectively.

Conclusion

Because the outstanding rejections and objection should be withdrawn and all of the pending claims are allowable, this application is, *prima facie*, in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore request the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:


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